

# HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HOME?



Healthy  
Home  
Tips



Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority

[www.ihcda.in.gov](http://www.ihcda.in.gov)



## Principles of a Healthy Home

There are seven main principles to having a healthy home and they are to keep your home DRY, CLEAN, VENTILATED, PEST-FREE, SAFE, CONTAMINANT-FREE, and MAINTAINED.

### 1. DRY

**Why keep it DRY?** Too much moisture can cause many problems in your house. It can cause wood, floors, and walls in your house to rot. It can also make your house a breeding place for pests and mold.

### 2. CLEAN

**Why keep it CLEAN?** Many health problems can come along with having a house that is not clean. When your house is dirty you are also more likely to have pest infestations.

### 3. VENTILATED

**Why keep it VENTILATED?** Dirty air circulating in your house can cause your family many health problems.

### 4. PEST-FREE

**Why keep it PEST-FREE?** Cockroaches, rodents, and other pests can breed diseases. Also, pests in your home can affect many health conditions negatively such as asthma and allergy symptoms.

### 5. SAFE

**Why keep it SAFE?** Injuries occur more in homes than people realize. There are just a few simple things you can do to reduce the risk of household injuries happening in your home.

### 6. CONTAMINANT-FREE

**Why keep it CONTAMINANT-FREE?** There are many contaminants that can be present in your home and cause your family major health problems. For example, carbon monoxide, lead, tobacco smoke, pesticides, and even household items if used improperly are some possible contaminants.

### 7. MAINTAINED

**Why keep it MAINTAINED?** Taking care of minor repairs as they come up makes your house less likely to have to have expensive repairs in the future. This is a great way to help you spend less money in the long run.

## Healthy Home Tips

There is not one single step you can do to keep your home healthy. It is important to address all the principles of a healthy home because they are all overarching with each other. The chart below shows how doing one tip can positively impact many principles of a healthy home all at once. The chart also tells you whether a tip reduces asthma triggers in your home and if it helps save energy.

### Helpful and Easy Tips to Keep Your Home Healthy

	Dry	Clean	Ventilated	Pest-Free	Contaminant Free	Safe	Maintained	Reduces Asthma	Saves Energy
1. Make sure your gutter stays clean and carries the water at least 5 feet from your house.	✓	✓				✓	✓		
2. At a minimum, open up windows while you are cooking or showering to help let the moisture out.	✓		✓				✓		
3. Hang damp laundry outside whenever possible. If you must dry it inside, open up a window.	✓		✓				✓		
4. Make sure clothes dryers are vented outside.	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓
5. Use exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom if you have them.	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
6. Never smoke in your house. If you must smoke, make sure to go outside.		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
7. Make sure vents on your walls and floor are clean.		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
8. Get rid of extra clutter to make it easier to clean.		✓		✓		✓	✓		
9. Replace air conditioning and heating filters every 1-3 months or when they are dirty. Houses with pets may need to change them more frequently. <i>*See right side panel for instructions about changing your filters.</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
10. Clean out the lint trap in your dryer.			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
11. Frequently Vacuum.		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
12. Repair or seal any holes in the walls or floors.	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
13. Do not put open garbage cans under your sink or put a lid on it. <i>*See inside panel fold for information on pest-control and the dangers of pesticides.</i>		✓		✓			✓		
14. Wipe up spills immediately with soap and water.		✓		✓		✓	✓		
15. Never use a gas range or oven to heat your home.					✓	✓	✓		
16. Limit the mixing of various chemicals such as bleach, pesticides, and other chemicals. <i>*See inside panel fold for asthma prevention tips and triggers.</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	
17. Repair and replace items as soon as they are broken.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18. Replace carbon monoxide and smoke detector batteries as needed. Check annually.					✓	✓	✓		

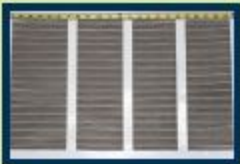
## HOW TO REPLACE AN AIR CONDITIONING/ HEATING FILTER:



**STEP 1:** Turn off air conditioner/  
furnace unit to stop air flow.  
Locate the filter in the unit by  
removing the filter cover.



**STEP 2:** Pull the filter out of  
the furnace.



**STEP 3:** Measure the older filter's  
outer dimensions if there  
are not any identifying  
numbers or letters on  
the casing. Purchase  
new filter.



**STEP 4:** Write the date on the new  
filter being put in to make  
it clear when it has been  
1-3 months and needs to  
be changed again. Slide  
the new air filter in the  
same way the old one  
came out.



**Step 5:** Return filter cover door  
that you opened to  
change the filter.





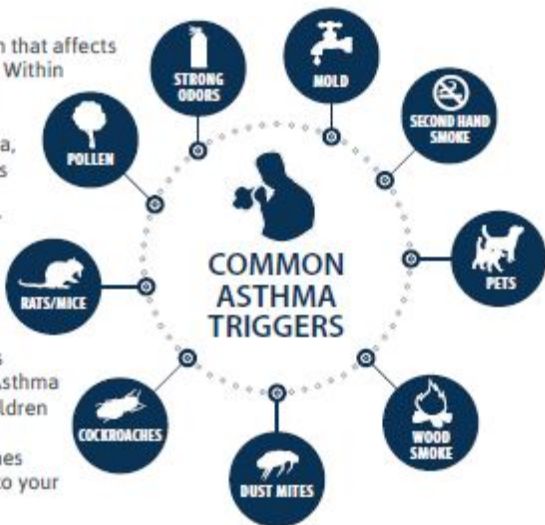
## Asthma

### WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a condition that affects a person's breathing. Within the lungs there are bronchial tubes. For someone with asthma, these bronchial tubes swell up, sometimes making it difficult for them to breath.

### ASTHMA AND CHILDREN

According to the Kids Count-Data Center, Asthma affects 10% of all children in Indiana. Asthma triggers can sometimes be directly related to your home enviroment.



### ASTHMA AT HOME PREVENTION TIPS:

- Do not allow pets in bedrooms and on furniture
- Do not use pesticides
- Wash children's stuffed animals frequently
- Avoid areas where people are smoking
- Avoid harsh chemical cleaning products
- Dust and vacuum frequently
- Wash bedding weekly
- Do not use air fresheners
- Change furnace/air conditioning filter

## Healthy Homes Program

**The Healthy Homes Program is intended to decrease the number of homes that are deferred from the Indiana Weatherization Assistance Programs, and improve the health of the occupants and energy efficiency of the home. Activities may include, but are not limited to, mold remediation, moisture control, knob and tube wiring issues, grading, minor roof repair, gutters, sump pump installation, and pest-control.**

### Chairman of the Board



Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann serves as Chairman of the Board for IHCDA. Lt. Governor Ellspermann is committed to growing Indiana's economy through housing development and community revitalization.